



March 30, 2010

Dr. Mary Ellen Petrisko
Vice President
Middle States Commission on Higher Education
3624 Market Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Dear Dr. Petrisko:

We respectfully submit this letter of transmittal along with a set of documents that attest to our efforts to fully comply with Standard 14. In this regard, we have aggressively addressed all of the compliance concerns expressed by the spring 2008 *Middle States Commission on Higher Education's* on-site accreditation visiting team.

After the spring 2008 review, the on-site accreditation visiting team representing the *Middle States Commission on Higher Education* presented preliminary findings which primarily addressed compliance concerns relative to Standard 14. Dr. Thelma Thompson, Chair of the visiting team, indicated that Lincoln University does not meet Standards 14 for the following reasons:

1. Limited and sporadic collection of assessment data
2. Limited analysis of collected assessment data
3. Limited evidence of utilization of assessment data
4. Limited documentation of assessment data being used to evaluate and improve student learning outcomes

Briefly summarized below is affirmative action that we have undertaken for each of the recommendations made by the Middle States Visiting Team.

1. That a Central Coordinating Unit for Assessment be identified

A Central Coordinating Unit for Assessment was identified by establishing and staffing The Office of Academic Assessment and Learning.

See: www.lincoln.edu/assessment

2. That said unit be placed at a sufficiently high level within the Organizational Chart

The established unit is a sufficiently high level within the Division of Academic Affairs. This unit is directed by the Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs and Director of Assessment. This individual reports to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs. The Provost reports to the President of Lincoln University.

See: www.lincoln.edu/assessment

3. That the unit be charged with supporting the assessment and improvement of student learning in core courses, academic major programs, and co-curricular areas

The Office of Academic Assessment and Learning was charged with the development and implementation of the Lincoln University Plan for the Assessment of Student Learning and Matriculation – 2009 – 2010 – Vol. I, II, III. This set of documents is the blueprint for facilitating program assessment and improvement of student learning in core courses, academic major programs, and co-curricular areas.

See: The Lincoln University Plan: Volumes 1, II, III and The Interim Program Assessment Reporting: Results and Progress on Closing the Loop that accompany this letter

4. That the University use existing data and information in conjunction with the student learning in the core curriculum, the major, and co-curricular areas in a conceptually appropriate manner

Existing data and information in conjunction with student learning in core courses, majors and co-curricular programs were used to develop the Lincoln University Plan for the Assessment of Student Learning and Matriculation – 2009 – 2010. This effort produced a comprehensive set of conceptually appropriate program assessment plans and processes in a cogent structure. This effort was designed to systematically facilitate reporting and continuous improvement of student learning and matriculation at Lincoln University.

See: The Lincoln University Plan: Volumes 1, II, III and The Interim Program Assessment Reporting: Results and Progress on Closing the Loop that accompany this letter

5. That there be collection and analysis of new data and information such that a purposeful linkage to University and sub-divisional goals are being assessed is clear.

Systematic collection and analysis of new data and information has been purposefully linked to University and sub-divisional goals. Analyses of collected data are based on program assessment plans and processes. The foundation of all program assessment plans and processes are the specific program mission, program goals and student learner goals. The specific program mission, program goals and student learner goals are linked to and are subsumed within the context of Lincoln University's mission and institutional goals

See: The Interim Program Assessment Reporting: Results and Progress on Closing the Loop that accompanies this letter

6. That all the above efforts be used to inform decision-making, planning and improvement of student learning

Reported interim program assessment results are used to inform decision-making, planning and improvement of student learning. At the end of each academic year, the interim and annual program assessment results are critically reviewed at the departmental, dean, divisional and presidential level. Those results provide the basis for subsequent action to close the loop and continuously improve student learning and matriculating experiences.

See: The Interim Program Assessment Reporting: Results and Progress on Closing the Loop that accompanies this letter.

7. That the data systematically collected can be both quantitative and qualitative

All program assessment plans require systematic collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data. Analyses of quantitative and qualitative data produce summary results that measure the extent to which program goals are being achieved. In addition, direct and indirect assessment measures are used. Each program assessment plan specifies quantitative and qualitative methods used in the collection of assessment data.

See: The Lincoln University Plan: Volumes 1, II and III

8. These efforts are to be systematic, sustained and fully documented in writing and conform to a well-defined timetable for systematic submission of assessment reports and results

Our efforts have been systematically conceived, are sustainable and fully documented in written program assessment reports. Those efforts will continue. We require interim program assessment and annual program assessment reports. Well defined timetables and guidelines have been established for systematic submission of interim and annual program assessment reports and results.

The interim program assessment report is designed to gage progress at the mid- year point and to address problems that may have occurred in the progression toward program goal(s) attainment. Annual program assessment reports complete academic year reporting processes that began with the interim program assessment report.

However, a thorough review of assessment results presented in both the interim and annual assessment report is conducted. Consequently, those assessment results are used to institute decisive action toward improvements in the student's learning and matriculating experiences.

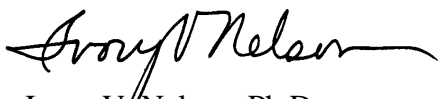
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The information presented is based on a thorough analysis of all previously documented program assessment activities that Lincoln University has been engaged in. In addition, a particularly critical review of the 2006–2009 period was performed. Consequently, the development of a comprehensive system of program assessment was afforded by significant amounts of previously existing elements and sources of data.

At this junction, we have systematically enhanced our engagement of significant continuous assessment conversations throughout the University community. All of these conversations are based on program assessment plans, plan implementation, reporting of results, review and actions to improve programs based on program assessment results in order to “close the loop”.

Moreover, these efforts are in concert with the University's Strategic Plan, which together have one single united composite goal. That goal is to progressively improve the learning and overall matriculation experiences of all Lincoln University students.

Very truly yours,



Ivory V. Nelson, Ph.D.
President